

Fiscal Year 2020

FAMILY DEVELOPMENT AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY PROGRAM ANNUAL REPORT



Prepared by:

Iowa Department of Human Rights
Division of Community Action Agencies
Lucas State Office Building
321 E. 12th St.
Des Moines, Iowa 50319
515-281-3861

<https://humanrights.iowa.gov/dcaa/fadss>

Family Development and Self-Sufficiency Council

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Iowa Family Development and Self-Sufficiency Program (FaDSS)

Strengthening Iowa's families. Strengthening Iowa's Economy.

INTRODUCTION

Iowa's Family Development and Self-Sufficiency Program (FaDSS) was created by the 1988 General Assembly to assist Family Investment Program (FIP) families with significant or multiple barriers reach self-sufficiency. FaDSS provides services that promote, empower, and nurture families toward economic self-sufficiency and family stability.

Participation in FaDSS is a voluntary option for families receiving FIP benefits. Eligible families are identified and referred to the program primarily by Iowa Workforce Development's PROMISE JOBS program. Referrals to FaDSS may also originate with the Department of Human Services, other social service providers, or as self-referrals. The program is provided to families in all 99 Iowa counties through a network of 17 community action and non-profit social services agencies.



Utilizing a strength-based approach, the program is delivered to families through home visits by certified Family Development Specialists. Core services include assessment and screening, family-driven goal setting, referrals to community resources and supports, and advocacy and self-empowerment.

FaDSS ADMINISTRATION

The FaDSS program is administered by the Iowa Department of Human Rights, Division of Community Action Agencies via a memorandum of understanding with the Iowa Department of Human Services. Funds from federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) legislation along with state appropriations support the provision of FaDSS services.

The Family Development and Self-Sufficiency Council, established to study, fund, and evaluate programs which provide developmental services to families at risk of long-term welfare dependency, is tasked with issuing a grant renewal application, reviewing proposals, and approving funding decisions every three years.

FaDSS Overview

Families that participate in FaDSS receive in-home services that support:

- ✓ Increased employment
- ✓ Increased income
- ✓ Decreased Family Investment Program (FIP) payments
- ✓ Achievement of educational goals
- ✓ Increased access to services and treatment for identified domestic violence
- ✓ Increased access to services and treatment for identified mental health concerns
- ✓ Increased access to treatment for identified substance abuse

Services are tailored to each family, using identified strengths to address barriers to self-sufficiency through six core program components:

- 1) Assessment
- 2) Goal Setting
- 3) Home Visiting
- 4) Referrals and Collaboration
- 5) Support
- 6) Advocacy and Self-Empowerment

HOW SERVICES ARE PROVIDED

The FaDSS program is provided to families in partnership with 17 community action and non-profit social service agencies. The program employs approximately 80 home visitors; over 90% of all FaDSS staff (home visitors and supervisors) have achieved at least a Bachelor's degree. All specialists complete an eight-day Family Development Certification program with the University of Iowa's National Resource Center for Family Centered Practice. All FaDSS staff are mandatory child abuse reporters and are required to complete criminal and child abuse background checks at hire and every two years.

Home visits serve as the foundation for all FaDSS services. The family development specialist with input from the family and supervisor determine the level of services the family will receive. Families are provided a minimum of two home visits and one additional contact per month during the first three months and at least one home visit and two additional contacts per month after that. If the family needs are determined to be greater than the minimum, the level of home visits and contacts will be adjusted. Families may receive FaDSS services while receiving FIP benefits and for seven months post-FIP.

NUMBER OF FAMILIES SERVED

At any point in time, the FaDSS program may serve 1,530 families. In fiscal year 2020, 2,268 families received services. 931 families completed the program during the reporting period, including 1,775 children (under the age of 18). Most families (82%) are referred for FaDSS services by the PROMISE JOBS program.

FAMILY WAGES AND FIP SAVINGS

During FY 2020, FaDSS families earned total **wages of \$5,500,240** resulting in a **FIP savings of \$758,022**.

Continuous Quality Improvement

The FaDSS program is committed to providing high-quality, outcomes-focused services for families. To that end, program leadership meet each quarter to review performance on select contract measures and family outcomes with the goal of identifying 1) areas where the program is achieving desired results and 2) opportunities to implement responsive changes to practice to ensure the program is on track to meet year-end targets.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The Iowa Department of Human Rights, in partnership with the FaDSS grantees, gathers a wealth of data related to program performance and self-sufficiency outcomes for families. Information about participants is collected by Family Development Specialists using the Self-Sufficiency Matrix, a tool that measures changes in 14 life domains. Demographic characteristics and information about the specific activities and services completed with families are also gathered. Together, this information allows the FaDSS program to:

- Understand family characteristics, including assets and barriers to self-sufficiency;
- Assess changes in family self-sufficiency and stability domains over the course of enrollment;
- Build upon program success and consider areas for further focus.

A NOTE ON THE DATA PRESENTED

In March of 2020, the State of Iowa declared an emergency public health disaster due to COVID-19. As a result, the FaDSS program implemented a series of rapid-response adjustments to ensure the safety of all staff and families served, including a requirement that programs provide virtual home visits only and the extension of transition services for up to 60 days after the end of the emergency declaration. These changes are expected to impact performance on contract measures over the next year and possibly longer.

PROGRAM EQUITY & COVID-19 RECOVERY

At the direction of the FaDSS Council, the program began concerted efforts to apply an equity lens to service provision with the formation of a FaDSS Equity Committee. All policies and practices are reviewed with an equity lens and focused efforts to engage FaDSS workers in ongoing discussions and learning are being implemented statewide.

As we continue to realize the impacts of COVID-19 on all Iowans, specific attention is being drawn to the disproportionate impact for low-income, marginalized and other under-served communities. This creates the opportunity to center the voices of families in addressing equitable economic recovery strategies.

FaDSS MATHEMATICA EVALUATION

The Family Development and Self-Sufficiency (FaDSS) program continues its participation in a national evaluation of family-focused coaching strategies designed to foster family economic self-sufficiency. The three-year evaluation is sponsored by the Office of Program Research and Evaluation at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and conducted by Mathematica Policy Research. The study is utilizing random assignment to treatment and control groups in a longitudinal study to measure the impact of FaDSS services.

The enrollment phase is completed, and 863 families are enrolled in the treatment and control groups. Local sites are continuing to submit service and program data into the Mathematica reporting system for families enrolled in the evaluation. Mathematica is now conducting follow-up surveys with program participants to assess the program model implementation. Mathematica is currently working on a program implementation report. A program impact report will follow.

Fiscal Year 2020 – Selected Outcomes

Increased Employment

- In FY 2020, 16% of FaDSS households had at least one adult employed at program entry. At exit, 50% of households had at least one adult employed.
- 604 families were involved in activities designed to increase work preparedness skills. These activities, provided by FaDSS, include resume writing, mock interviews, and assistance with completing job applications.

Increased Income

- In FY 2020, families that were employed at exit had an average monthly family income of \$1,323, an increase of \$1,124.

Decreased Family Investment Program (FIP) Payments

- At entry, families averaged \$379 in monthly FIP payments. At exit, the average FIP payment for families was \$134, a decrease of \$245.

Achievement of Educational Goals

- 125 adults that exited the FaDSS program in FY 2019 achieved a change in their education status.
 - 52 families completed a GED/HS Diploma
 - 41 families completed some college courses
 - 20 families completed a certification program
 - 11 families completed an Associate's Degree
 - 1 families completed a Bachelor's Degree

Increased Access to Services and Treatment - Domestic Violence

- In FY 2020, 110 FaDSS families that exited the program had experienced domestic violence.
- 85% of those families accessed necessary and appropriate assistance. The FaDSS program assisted 70% of families with accessing domestic violence assistance.

Increased Access to Services and Treatment - Mental Health

- In FY 2020, 405 adults that exited the program had a substantiated mental health issue.
- 88% of those adults with a mental health barrier accessed treatment. The FaDSS program assisted 88% of adults with gaining access to treatment.

Increased Access to Treatment - Substance Abuse

- In FY 2020, 137 adults that exited the program had a substantiated substance abuse issue.
- 86% of those adults with a substance abuse barrier accessed treatment. The FaDSS program assisted 78% with gaining access to treatment.

The Self-Sufficiency Matrix

Families participating in the FaDSS program often face multiple barriers to self-sufficiency. Through an in-depth assessment process (including both formal and informal assessment), Family Development Specialists work with families to identify areas of strength that are then used to address barriers. The Self-Sufficiency Matrix provides a mechanism for program staff to measure changes in a family's situation from entry (within 60 days of enrollment) to program exit. The Self-Sufficiency Matrix measures family stability across 14 life domains. Answering a series of questions for each family domain, Family Development Specialists rate stability on a scale of 1 through 5 based on his/her observation and assessment.

Self-Sufficiency Matrix – Domains

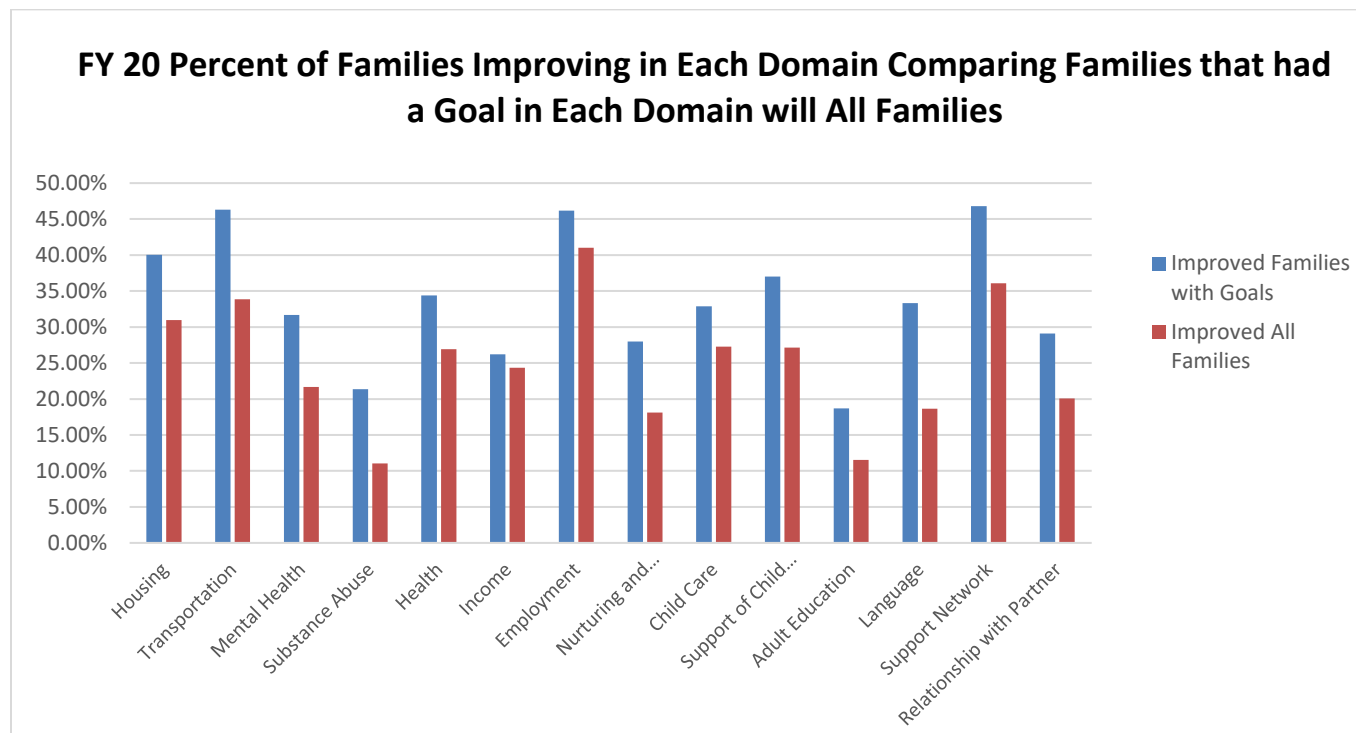
1. Housing	8. Parenting, Nurturing and Attachment
2. Transportation	9. Child Care
3. Mental Health	10. Support of Child Development
4. Substance Abuse	11. Adult Education
5. Health	12. Language
6. Income	13. Support Network
7. Employment	14. Relationship with Partner

Self-Sufficiency Matrix - Stability Scale



SELF-SUFFICIENCY MATRIX RESULTS

By comparing scores for each family domain at entry and at exit, we can gain insight into the cumulative impact of FaDSS services on self-sufficiency and stability measures. For the current reporting period, 894 families had both entry and exit scores.



A key component of FaDSS is helping families learn to set goals to meet the needs of their families. The chart above shows the difference between the improvements of families in each domain compared to those who established goals within each domain. Below are examples of how goal setting has made marked improvement in families' lives.

Transportation

Many families struggle to access reliable transportation for such things as work and appointments. Overall, thirty-three percent of families in FaDSS improved their transportation. Forty-six percent of families improved in the area of transportation when goals were established.

Support Network

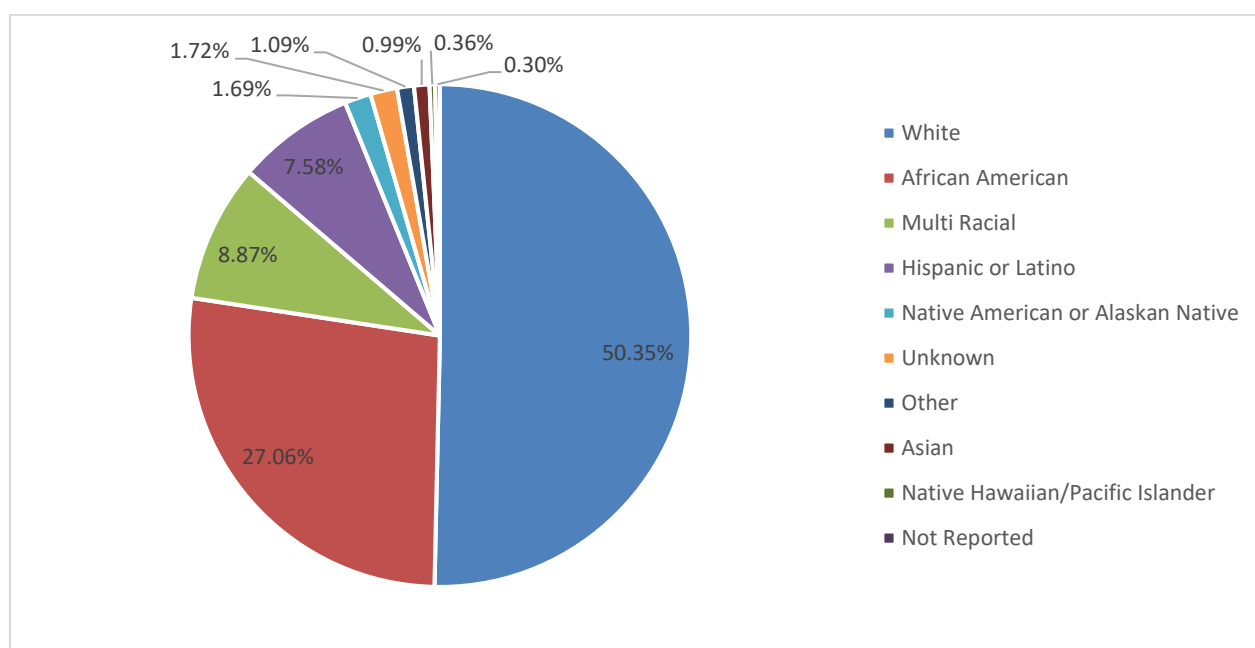
FaDSS assists families in identifying support networks. Thirty-six percent of all families improved their support networks while in FaDSS in FY 2020. Forty-seven percent of families who established a formal goal for support networks improved.

Fiscal Year 2020 – Selected Demographics

CHARACTERISTICS OF FAMILIES SERVED

Demographic information about FaDSS participants is collected at the family (rather than individual) level, though the program often narrows in on characteristics of the designated “Head of Household” to identify and understand trends related to family structure and progress toward self-sufficiency. Overall, 87% of families are headed by a female; 51% are headed by an individual aged 24-34. The chart below provides insight into the racial and ethnic composition of FaDSS families. Overall, families of color are disproportionately represented in the FaDSS program when compared to Iowa’s general population, but reflective of the disproportionate representation of families of color in the FIP program.

Race and ethnicity of family heads of household



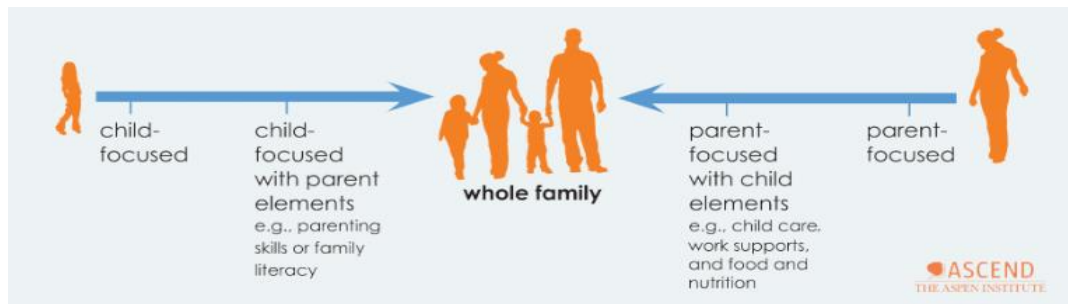
Educational levels, heads of household

Head of Household Education Level at Enrollment	Individuals	Percent
Less than High School	220	24%
High School Diploma / HI Set	334	37%
Some College	229	25%
Trade/vocational Training	60	7%
Two year college degree (Associate)	37	4%
Four year college degree (Bachelor)	20	2%
Master degree or above	3	<1%
TOTAL	903	100%*

*Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Two-Generation Initiative

A Two-Generation approach seeks to ensure that programs and policies are designed and implemented with a mindset that understands the intersecting needs of parents and their children. Applying a “2-Gen lens” facilitates the strategic alignment of existing systems and services, allowing for a whole family approach to moving families out of poverty. This approach does not require development of new programs or services, but it does require a shift in thinking about how existing services and programs are provided.



Iowa's 2-Gen Vision

Iowa began its TANF 2-Gen initiative to improve the lives of families in poverty who are enrolled in the Family Investment Program (FIP), specifically families participating in the Family Development and Self-Sufficiency (FaDSS) Program and PROMISE JOBS (PJ).

Iowa seeks to implement promising 2-Gen strategies, policies, and practices to help break the cycle of poverty and improve the overall well-being for Iowa families. To this end, the Steering Committee and Core Team developed a plan that included gathering input and feedback from a variety of stakeholders. This information is formulated into strategies and corresponding outcomes to be tested as part of a pilot project.

Pilot Development

In Fiscal Year 20, FaDSS began implementing 2-Gen strategies and activities in four pilot sites. The pilot sites are Lutheran Services of Iowa, Mid-Iowa Community Action, Northeast Iowa Community Action Corporation and Operation Threshold.

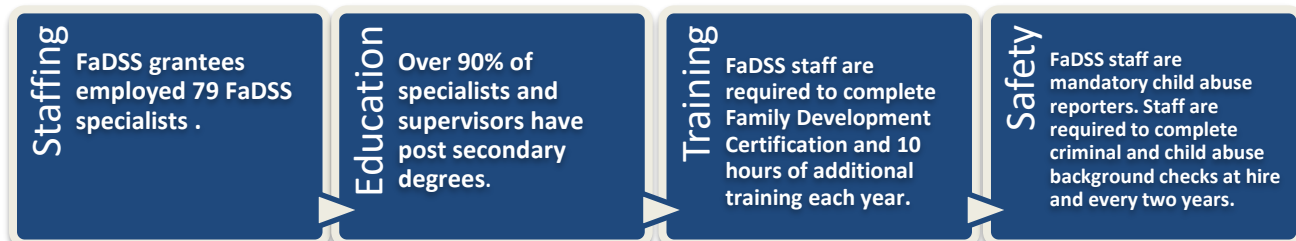
The 2-Gen pilot incorporates strategies for foundational training on 2-Gen concepts and practices, family leadership development, and system collaboration and data sharing. Pilot sites are identifying target populations, service strategies, and outcome measures. Sites will continue to place emphasis on the input of families, frontline staff, and other stakeholders throughout the timeframe of the pilot and beyond.

Fiscal Year 2020 Capacity and Funding

During FY 2019, FaDSS was funded with an appropriation of \$6,192,834 in TANF and state general funds. In addition, other supports of \$1,416,316 were provided to supplement FaDSS services.

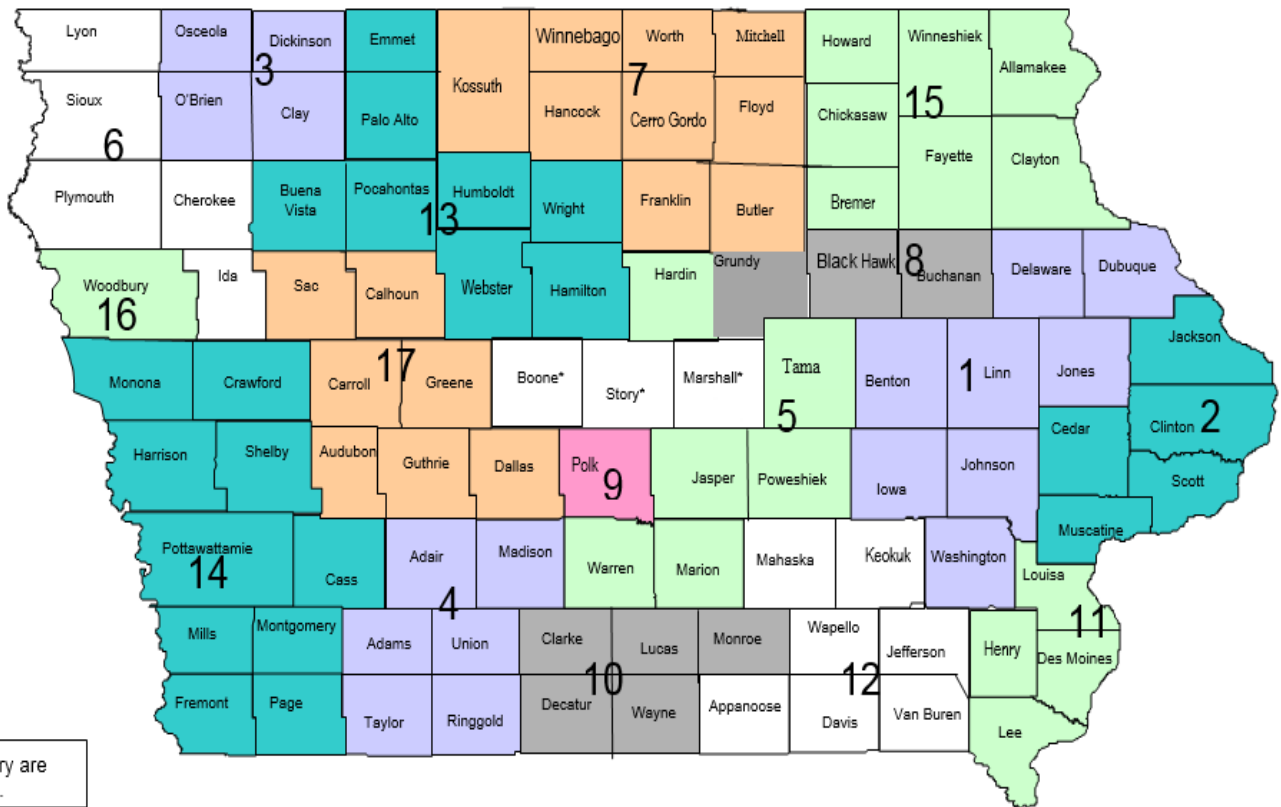
Grantee	Family Capacity	Total Grant	Other Support	Total FaDSS
Community Action Agency of Siouxland	40	\$159,513	\$8,749	\$168,262
Community Action of Eastern Iowa	98	\$367,591	\$0	\$367,591
Community Action of SE Iowa	90	\$344,012	\$4,500	\$348,512
Four Oaks	222	\$872,363	\$12,747	\$885,110
Lutheran Services of Iowa	39	\$149,264	\$5,209	\$154,473
MATURA Action Corporation	29	\$122,931	\$0	\$122,931
Mid Iowa Community Action	134	\$516,607	\$162	\$516,769
Mid-Sioux Opportunity	35	\$142,105	\$1,590	\$143,695
Northeast Iowa Community Action Corporation	77	\$298,732	\$2,568	\$301,300
North Iowa Community Action Organization	72	\$275,210	\$0	\$275,210
Operation Threshold	79	\$286,677	\$4,674	\$291,351
Polk Family Enrichment Center	189	\$722,425	\$1,428,973	\$2,151,398
South Central Iowa Community Action Program	53	\$202,585	\$0	\$202,585
Sieda Community Action	105	\$401,347	\$0	\$401,347
Upper Des Moines Opportunity	75	\$289,446	\$10,000	\$299,446
West Central Community Action	105	\$401,347	\$13,534	\$414,881
Youth and Shelter Services	88	\$313,167	\$29,901	\$343,068
Total	1530	\$5,865,322	\$1,522,607	\$7,387,929
DHR Admin @5%	-	\$309,642	-	-
Technology	-	\$ 17,870	-	-
Total Appropriations	-	\$6,192,834	-	-

Selected program features, FY2020



FaDSS Grantee Service Areas

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Four Oaks 2. Community Action of Eastern Iowa 3. Lutheran Service in Iowa 4. Matura Action Corp. 5. Mid-Iowa Community Action 6. Mid-Sioux Opportunity 7. North Iowa Community Action Org. 8. Operation Threshold 9. Polk County Family Enrichment Center | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. South Central Iowa Community Action Program 11. Southeast Iowa Community Action Org. 12. Southern Iowa Economic Development Association 13. Upper Des Moines Opportunity, Inc. 14. West Central Community Action 15. Northeast Iowa Community Action Corp. 16. Community Action of Siouxland 17. Youth and Shelter Services, Inc. |
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FaDSS Grantee Service Areas

Service Area #	FaDSS Grantees	Service Area #	FaDSS Grantees
1	Four Oaks Family and Children's Services Dubuque- Julie Weber– 563-557-3100 QCJweber@fouroaks.org or Cedar Rapids-Amber Mercil amercil@fouroaks.org 319-247-4834	10	South Central Iowa Community Action Program Jamie Swearingin 641-3441045 jswearingin@scicap.org
2	Community Action of Eastern Iowa Lisa Raya 563-324-3236 ext. 1217 lraya@caeiowa.org	11	Community Action of Southeast Iowa Joy Szewczyk 319-753-0193 joy.szewczyk@caofseia.org
3	Lutheran Services in Iowa Jennifer Dykshoorn 712-262-4083 jennifer.dykshoorn@lsiowa.org	12	Southern Iowa Economic Development Association Deb Shubat 641-814-2759 dshubat@sieda.org
4	MATURA Action Corp. Katie Christensen 641-782-8431 kchristensen@maturaact.org	13	Upper Des Moines Opportunity, Inc. Alisa Schlieff 515-576-7774 aschlieff@udmo.com
5	Mid-Iowa Community Action Mindy Clayton 641-236-3923 Mindy.Clayton@micaonline.org	14	West Central Community Action Mindy Williamson 712-304-3358 mwilliamson@westcca.org
6	Mid-Sioux Opportunity Laura Benson 712-786-3483 lbenson@midsioux.org	15	Northeast Iowa Community Action Corp. Nichole Griesse 563-419-8243 ngriesse@neicac.org
7	North Iowa Community Action Organization Lori Brandt 641.423.7766 lbrandt@nicao-online.org	16	Community Action Agency of Siouxland Antoinette Green 712-274-1610 agreen@caasiouxland.org
8	Operation Threshold Mindy Dolan 319-291-2065 MDolan@operationthreshold.org	17	Youth and Shelter Services, Inc. Peg Ragner 515-233-3141 x4405 PRagner@yss.org
9	Polk County Family Enrichment Center Doug Stodgel 515-286-3406 doug.stodgel@polkcountyiowa.gov		

FaDSS Success Stories

Mid-Sioux Opportunity

Betty is a single mom of 5 kids, who enrolled in the FaDSS program in November of 2017. FaDSS was able to help Betty through a challenging time of working with the Department of Human Services (DHS) and going through a custody and divorce battle.



Betty had worked part-time jobs here and there to make ends meet and take care of her family. She had a lot going on with her kids, who had many medical and mental health appointments so it was a challenge to hold a full-time job. FaDSS connected Betty to other services offered through Mid-Sioux Opportunity to help during this time. She received assistance through the Low-income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), the Christmas and Back to School programs as well crisis help with food and utilities.

Betty has developed several positive and encouraging supports while in the FaDSS program, one of them being her fiancé. Betty also started a full-time job in July of 2020, earning \$22.00 per hour and is now receiving child support. Betty is able to get her kids to all appointments and school activities while maintaining her full-time job. Betty and her kids completed the transition period of FaDSS and recently moved to Nebraska to be with her fiancé and they will be getting married in September of 2020.

Four Oaks

Laquana and her two-year-old son joined the FaDSS program in June 2019 after moving to Dubuque from Chicago. Laquana had been homeless for years moving between homeless shelters. She began receiving FIP and was referred to FaDSS by her PROMISE JOBS case manager.

Laquana's FaDSS specialist completed a child development screening with her son, which came back positive for a speech delay. The specialist referred him to Keystone AEA where he was paired with a speech therapist.



With assistance from FaDSS, Laquana was able to move from a local homeless shelter into an efficiency apartment. Shortly after, she began working fulltime as a housekeeper at a local nursing home. She was also approved for Section 8 and is looking forward to moving into an apartment where her son will have his own bedroom.

Laquana is no longer receiving FIP. She has been employed for over a year and is eligible for health insurance, vacation time and retirement through her employer. Her son is now in preschool and is doing very well.

West Central Community Action

Katie and her three-year-old daughter began working with the FaDSS program in September 2019. Katie was in a treatment center for substance abuse at that time. Because of her substance abuse, Katie had an active DHS child welfare case and was on probation for drug-related charges.



While in the FaDSS program, Katie graduated from substance abuse treatment and maintained her sobriety. She moved into a group home and found employment earning \$15 per hour. She and her FADSS specialist focused on goal-setting which has helped Katie set a monthly budget, pay off her traffic fines, get her driver license back and start saving for a vehicle.

In December 2019, a judge determined that Katie was a stable parent and closed her CINA case. She was released from probation three months later and has been maintaining her success since then. She enjoys her job and states that she is proud of her accomplishments and appreciates the support of the FaDSS program.